

Las Cruces, NM – Tuesday, Congressman Harry Teague joined President Barack Obama and Congressman Silvestre Reyes at Fort Bliss to greet troops who recently returned from Iraq and thank them for their service.

“I am grateful for the service and safe return of these brave soldiers. As we celebrate the return of these service men and women who sacrificed so much to protect our freedom, it’s important to remember the 50,000 troops still serving in Iraq. Our job is not done until they are home safely,” said Congressman Harry Teague. “I was honored to have the opportunity to be at Fort Bliss today to extend my thanks and gratitude for their service and welcome them home.”

Also today, Congressman Teague delivered to the President a letter that addressed the importance of Holloman Air Force Base (HAFB), urging a quick transition to HAFB’s recently announced F-16 mission to minimize any economic impact on the community, as well as urging continued growth in the mission and number of F-16 planes stationed at Holloman.

“Now that you are visiting Fort Bliss, which is contiguous to Holloman, I would like to take this opportunity to address the importance of Holloman Air Force Base with you directly,” Teague [wrote in the letter](#)

. “I have the following requests for you:

- Stick hard and fast to the schedule the Air Force has laid out for the arrival of the two F-16 training squadrons at Holloman. Any deviation from that schedule could cause an economic bathtub and severely harm the economy of Alamogordo.

- Deliver “twin” Block 42 F-16 training squadrons to Holloman. The Air Force has a choice of sending Holloman either two Block 42 F-16 squadrons or one Block 42 F-16 squadron and one Block 25 F-16 squadron. Sending twin Block 42 squadrons to Holloman will allow greater maintenance efficiency for the base and the Air Force.

- As F-35s begin to arrive at Luke Air Force Base in the coming years, base Luke’s other two F-16 training squadrons at Holloman. The base and the community are capable of and enthusiastic about supporting them.

- Continue the military’s support for basing RPA missions at Holloman by building a

new runway for RPAs at Holloman that will allow training of take-off and landings. “

To read the [full letter](#) , please [click here](#) .

Earlier this year, Teague joined friends and family of members of New Mexico’s 920th Engineering Company of the Army National Guard on the tarmac at Fort Bliss to welcome home the returning soldiers. Based out of Roswell, the Engineering Company had been deployed to Afghanistan for nearly a year.